Setting up of offices of VSNL in North Eastern Region

3848. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any plan to set up more offices of VSNL in the North Eastern Region, in order to give exposure to the people of the region on latest technologies ;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ;

(d) whether VSNL will arrange training for youths of the region in latest internet technologies;

(e) whether Government arc aware of the need to train youths to set up companies; and

(0 if so, the steps being taken by Government for promotion of IT industry in the North-East ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) and (b) Sir, VSNL has full fledged gateway at Calcutta for providing international access to the Eastern Region including the North East. An earth station at Guwahati is also being set up. At present any ISP can connect their network to Calcutta gateway for international access. As and when Guwahati gateway is commissioned, they will be able to have access from there as well.

(c) In view of (a) and (b) above, the question docs not arise.

(d) VSNL is not in the business of imparling such training.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(0 Some of the major steps taken for promotion of IT industry in the North Eastern Region are :-

(i) Software Technology Park is being set up at Guwahati with hub at Sikkim.

(ii) Education and Research Network (ERNET) India has already connected seven universities namely, Tezpur University, North Eastern Hill University, Arunachal University, Manipur University,

Tripura University, Dibrugarh University, Assam Agriculture Research University on the high speed network ERNET has also set up a major Presence of Point at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati, which is being connected on a 2 Mbps leased line on the world wide terrestrial back bone from Calcutta. Community information Centre are proposed to be set up at all the 486 blocks in the North East Region including Sikkim. A pilot project of setting up a Community Information Centre at 30 blocks in the North East Region including Sikkim has been initiated. The funds are provided through Special Employment Generation Training Scheme (SEGDTS) to set up computer training institutes for training to SC/ ST in the North East.

Improvement of ITI unit, Palghat

3849. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the ITI Employees Association Palghat submitted a memorandum regarding the improvement of the ITI unit, Palghat; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Following steps have been taken to help ITI:

(i) 25% in switching and a maximum 30% in transmission equipment (if the equipment is not manufactured by HTL) of total requirement of DOT is ordered on ITI as reserve quota.

(ii) Release of reservation quota orders much ahead of tenders.

(iii) 75% advance against purchase orders of reservation quota are given to ITI. No interest is charged during original delivery period.

(iv) Also ITI is allowed to participate in the open tenders to secure additional orders.

(v) Exemption from payment of earnest money deposit and performance guarantee in tenders.